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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/932,606	08/17/2001	Michael A. Leska	END920010060US1	5084
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IBM Corp Dept. 917 3605 Highway 52 North Rochester, MN 55901-7829			EXAMINER JARRETT, SCOTT L	
			ART UNIT 3623	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 11/22/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/932,606

Applicant(s)

LESKA ET AL.

Examiner

Scott L. Jarrett

Art Unit

3623

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 17 August 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-36 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-36 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>8/17/2001</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. Applicant is reminded of the proper language and format for an abstract of the disclosure.

The abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single paragraph on a separate sheet within the range of 50 to 150 words. It is important that the abstract not exceed 150 words in length since the space provided for the abstract on the computer tape used by the printer is limited. The form and legal phraseology often used in patent claims, such as "means" and "said," should be avoided. The abstract should describe the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether there is a need for consulting the full patent text for details.

The language should be clear and concise and should not repeat information given in the title. It should avoid using phrases which can be implied, such as, "The disclosure concerns," "The disclosure defined by this invention," "The disclosure describes," etc.

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because it is longer than 150 words.

Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Objections

2. Claim 36 is objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 36 does not utilize the proper computer program product format. There is no indication that the proposed software is capable of execution by a computer. Examiner suggests that the applicant incorporate into claim 36 language that the proposed software is recorded on computer-readable medium and capable of execution by a computer to overcome this objection.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1, 17, 20 and 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Henneuse et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,963,913.

Regarding Claims 1, 17, 20 and 36 Henneuse et al. teach a method and system for scheduling a plurality of meetings with a plurality of invitees (entities, individuals, etc.) on a calendar of a user (primary user) comprising (Abstract):

- creating an appointment template (object, form, calendar, etc.; Column 1, Lines 43-55; Column 3, Lines 9-45; Figures 2-5);
- sending (making available, providing, distributing, etc.) the appointment template (e.g. appointment calendar) to a plurality of invitees (users; Column 1, Lines 49-68; Column 3, Lines 26-58; Figures 2-5); and
- each invitee selecting an available time slot (time block, appointment, reservation, meeting time, free time, etc.) from the appointment template (calendar, meeting request) to schedule a meeting with the user (primary user; Column 1, Lines 55-68; Column 2, Lines 1-13; Column 3, Lines 58-68; Column 4, Lines 1-18; Figures 2-5).

Henneuse et al. further teach that it is old and well known in the art to provide user's with access to other users calendars for the purposes of scheduling

meetings/appointments one such method/system being Lotus Organizer (Column 1, Lines 14-26).

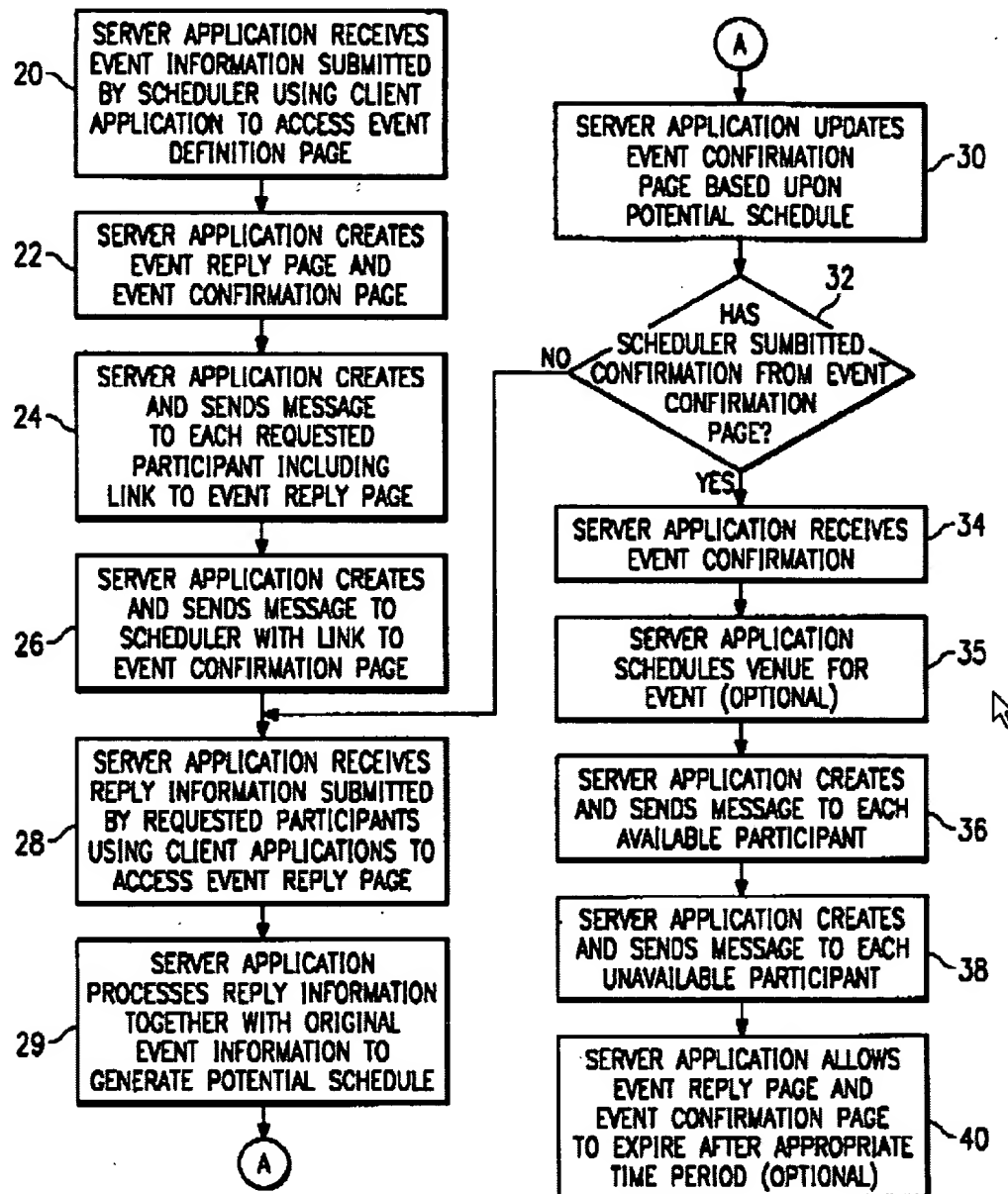


FIG. 2

FIG. 3

50

The Meeting Maker

NAME:

MEETING NAME:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

EXT:

MEETING DESCRIPTION:

52

Click the check boxes of the days that you are available, then highlight the times during that day that you will be able to meet.

January 1997

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
		8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
		9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
		10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>	9 <input type="checkbox"/>	10 <input type="checkbox"/>
8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
13 <input type="checkbox"/>	14 <input type="checkbox"/>	15 <input type="checkbox"/>	16 <input type="checkbox"/>	17 <input type="checkbox"/>
8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
20 <input type="checkbox"/>	21 <input type="checkbox"/>	22 <input type="checkbox"/>	23 <input type="checkbox"/>	24 <input type="checkbox"/>
8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
27 <input type="checkbox"/>	28 <input type="checkbox"/>	29 <input type="checkbox"/>	30 <input type="checkbox"/>	31 <input type="checkbox"/>
8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	8:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	9:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>
10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>	10:00 am <input type="checkbox"/>

54

MEETING PARTICIPANT'S E-MAIL OR GROUP ALIAS
(Separated by a space)

56

SEND IT!

RESET

FIG. 4

MEETING NAME

MEETING DESCRIPTION

Check the box next to the dates that you are available

<p>Monday January 6th</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 12:00am-12:00pm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3:00pm-5:00pm</p>	<p>Tuesday January 7th</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 8:00am-10:00am</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 3:00pm-4:00pm</p>
<p>Wednesday January 8th</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 12:00pm-1:00pm</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 4:00pm-5:00pm</p>	<p>Thursday January 8th</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 12:00pm-4:00pm</p>

NAME:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

SEND IT! RESET

FIG. 5

"MEETING NAME"

The following people are available at these times. Dates with the most overlap are most likely the best time to schedule a meeting.

Check the box next to a time to schedule a conference room

Monday January 6th	Tuesday January 7th	Wednesday January 8th	Thursday January 8th
<input type="checkbox"/> 10:00am-12:00pm <u>Name1</u> <u>Name2</u> <u>Name3</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> 9:00am-10:00am <u>Name2</u> <u>Name1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> 12:00pm-1:00pm <u>Name1</u> <u>Name2</u> <u>Name3</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> 12:00pm-4:00pm <u>Name2</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> 3:00pm-5:00pm <u>Name3</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> 3:00pm-4:00pm <u>Name3</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> 4:00pm-5:00pm <u>Name1</u> <u>Name2</u> <u>Name3</u>	

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 2-16, 19 and 21-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Henneuse et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,963,913 as applied to claims 1, 17, 20 and 36 above and further in view of Scully et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,831,552.

Regarding Claims 2 and 21 Henneuse et al. teach a meeting/appointment scheduling system and method further comprising identifying a user's schedule wherein the schedule includes a plurality of previously schedule events/appointments/meetings (Column 1, Lines 14-26).

Henneuse et al. does not expressly teach identifying days worked and workday start/end times on the user's calendar as claimed.

Scully et al. teach identifying days worked, work day start/end times (working, non-working time), time zones, daylight saving times, onsite/offsite and a plurality of other meeting/appointments types/categories (Column 13, Lines 25-68; Columns 15-16) and blocking out (reserving, busy time, unavailable, etc.) previously schedule appointments/meetings and the like, in an analogous art of meeting/appointment

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scheduling, for the purposes of scheduling meetings amongst a plurality of users (Column 2, Lines 11-35; Column 3, Lines 1-45).

More generally Scully et al. teach an electronic calendaring method and system wherein users can create and manage a plurality of appointments/meetings as well as schedule appointments amongst a plurality of users (meeting requests) wherein users can search/view free/available time blocks (time slots, time periods) and other calendar/appointment parameters (e.g. priority) in the calendars of the users they wish to schedule a meeting/appointment with and then schedule the appointment (i.e. add it to their calendars, block off the time slot/period; Column 22, Lines 64-68; Column 23, Lines 45-68; Figures 3a-3c).

Scully et al. further teaches the utilization of calendar objects which are represented/implemented in multi-dimensional arrays (data structure; Column 6, Lines 11-68; Column 9, Lines 1-40) and enabling users to identify (search for) a plurality of calendar/schedule appointments and/or time blocks based on a plurality of search criteria (Column 23, Lines 60-68; Column 24, Lines 1-68).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the method and system for scheduling appointments/meetings amongst a plurality of users as taught by Henneuse et al., with its ability to provide access to a user's calendar containing previously scheduled appointments/meetings would have benefited from further identifying additional scheduling constraints/calendar events such as work schedule (days, times, etc.) and the like in view of the teachings of Scully et al. the

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resultant system providing users with the ability to schedule meetings with a plurality of users while taking into account not only the time in which the invitees are available/free but also the relative importance/priority of previously scheduled events enabling the user to schedule events with users that may have a higher priority/importance (Scully et al.: Column 3, Lines 20-57).

While Henneuse et al. and Scully et al. teach creating appointments for a plurality of events/meetings/activities neither Henneuse et al. nor Scully et al. expressly teach that one such event/activity/meeting is a break time as claimed.

Official notice is taken that including times in which a user is unavailable for meetings including times such as break times (e.g. lunch) is old and very well known in the art.

For example a person who does not wish to be scheduled for meetings during their lunch break commonly blocks out those times on the calendar thereby ensuring other users wishing to schedule meetings will see these break times as unavailable/busy.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling meetings/appointments amongst a plurality of users wherein times in which the user(s) is unavailable for meetings is entered into the users calendar and made available to others as taught by the combination of

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Henneuse et al. and Scully et al. would have benefited from further identifying break times as unavailable time slots/periods for meetings in view of official notice; the resultant system enabling users to block any time on their calendar in which they are not available for meetings/appointments.

Regarding Claims 3, 8-19 and 22 Henneuse et al. teach an appointment scheduling system and method wherein users can schedule a plurality of meetings based on the availability of the users/invitees and further wherein the meeting comprises a length/duration, start/end time, time frame and schedule/time restrictions (e.g. previous appointments; Column 3, Lines 11-26; Column 4, Lines 58-68; Column 5, Lines 1-15; Figures 3-5).

Hennesuse et al. does not expressly teach creating a user appointment by merging a default template which defines days worked, workday start/end times and break times and the user's appointment template (schedule, calendar) containing previously schedule events and the user's selected meeting/appointment as claimed.

Scully et al. teaches creating/scheduling an appointment/meeting based (combining, overlaying, merging) the users calendar/schedule containing previously schedule appointments/meetings (e.g. availability, free time), the defined/identified schedules restraints/restrictions (days worked, workday start/end times, etc.) and user's

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selected (entered) meeting/appointment (e.g. its length, time frame, etc.; Column 22, Lines 18-68; Column 23, Lines 1-68; Column 24, Lines 10-68; Figures 3a-5b).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the method and system for scheduling appointments/meetings amongst a plurality of users as taught by Henneuse et al. would have benefited from identifying additional scheduling constraints/calendar events such as work schedule (days, times, etc.) and the like in view of the teachings of Scully et al.; the resultant system enabling users to schedule meetings with a plurality of users taking into account not only the time in which the invitees are available/free but also the relative importance/priority of previously scheduled events thereby enabling the user to schedule events with users that may have a higher priority/importance (Scully et al.: Column 3, Lines 20-57).

While Henneuse et al. and Scully et al. teach creating appointments for any event/meeting/activity neither Henneuse et al. nor Scully et al. expressly teach that one such event/activity/meeting is a break time or a periodic/recurring event as claimed.

Official notice is taken that scheduling/blocking break times in a users calendar is old and well known in the art as discussed above.

Further official notice is taken that the scheduling/blocking of periodic/recurring meetings is old and very well known in the art.

For example it is common for people to schedule/block recurring/periodic team meetings (e.g. weekly status meetings), holidays or the like because defining/scheduling a single recurring appointment is easier than individually scheduling/defining a set/set of identical appointments.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling meetings/appointments amongst a plurality of users wherein the times for which the user(s) is unavailable for meetings is entered into the users calendar and made available to others as taught by the combination of Henneuse et al. and Scully et al. would have benefited from further identifying break times as unavailable time slots/periods for meetings in view of official notice; the resultant system enabling users to block any time on their calendar in which they are not available for meetings/appointments.

Further it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the electronic calendaring system and method as taught by the combination of Hennuese et al. and Scully et al. would have benefited from enabling users to schedule/define/identify periodic/recurring appointments in view of official notice; the resultant system providing a simpler mechanism for defining a common set of repeating calendar events/meetings.

Regarding Claims 4 and 23 Henneuse et al. teach a system and method for scheduling one or more appointments/meetings with one or more invitees further comprising:

- scheduling an available time (meeting, appointment, timeslot, etc.) in response to a user selected a available time (Column 5, Lines 18-68; Figures 2-5); and
- notifying the user and the first invitee of the scheduled meeting (Column 5, Lines 60-68; Column 7, Lines 1-10).

Henneuse et al. does not expressly teach entering the meeting/appointment in into the user's appointment template (calendar/schedule) or blocking other invitees/users from scheduling a conflicting meeting as claimed.

Official notice is taken that entering (adding, inputting, etc.) a meeting/appointment into the user's calendar/schedule and subsequently blocking (marking as unavailable, busy time, reserving, etc.) other users from scheduling a conflicting meeting is old and well known in the art and is an underlying function of scheduling/calendaring systems and methods since it is an accepted that individuals typically can/should/may not attend more than one meeting at a time.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling meetings amongst a plurality of users as taught by Henneuse et al. would have benefited from automatically/dynamically

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entering/adding the scheduled/confirmed meeting on the attendees/invitees/participant calendars and marking the time block/slot/period as unavailable in view of the teachings of official notice; the resultant system presenting a user's availability by blocking/marking unavailable those times for which the user's has a previously scheduled meeting/appointment.

Regarding Claims 5 and 24 Henneuse et al. teach a system and method for scheduling one or more appointments/meetings with one or more invitees further comprising:

- a plurality of users iteratively (successively) selecting multiple meeting times (appointments, reservations, etc.) from the user's calendar (appointment template) until each invitee selects an appointment/meeting (Column 3, Lines 58-68; Column 4, Lines 1-50; Column 5, Lines 18-55; Figures 2-5); and
- notifying the user and each invitee of the scheduled meeting/appointment time (Column 4, Lines 1-50; Column 5, Lines 39-68; Figures 2-5).

Regarding Claims 6 and 25 Henneuse et al. teach a system and method for scheduling one or more appointments/meetings with one or more invitees wherein the calendar/appointment template comprises an object having a plurality of attributes (parameters, values, etc.) including but not limited to current/scheduled appointments, meeting/appointment start/end times and the like (Column 3, Lines 11-26; Column 4, Lines 58-68; Column 5, Lines 1-15; Figures 3-5).

Henneuse et al. does not expressly teach the specific data structure in which the appointment/calendar information is a two dimensional array of objects wherein each object represents a block of time (appointment, reservation, timeslot, etc.) and an attribute.

Scully et al. further teaches the utilization of calendar objects which are represented/implemented in multi-dimensional arrays (data structure; Column 6, Lines 11-68; Column 9, Lines 1-40) and enabling users to identify (search for) a plurality of calendar/schedule appointments and/or time blocks based on a plurality of search criteria (Column 23, Lines 60-68; Column 24, Lines 1-68).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling meetings amongst a plurality of users as taught by Henneuse et al. would have benefited from utilizing any of a plurality of data structures/approaches for representing calendars/schedules/meetings including but not limited to multi-dimensional arrays and calendar objects in view of the teachings of Scully et al.; the resultant system providing a convenient mechanism for storing and searching appointment/meeting schedules.

Further it is noted that these differences are only found in the non-functional descriptive material and are not functionally involved in the steps recited nor do they

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alter the recited structural elements. The recited method steps would be performed the same regardless of the specific data structure utilized to stored the appointment/schedule information. Further, the structural elements remain the same regardless of the specific data structure utilized. Thus, this descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, *see In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983); *In re Lowry*, 32 F.3d 1579, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed. Cir. 1994); MPEP 2106.

Regarding Claims 7 and 26 Henneuse et al. teach a system and method for scheduling one or more appointments/meetings with one or more invitees wherein at least one calendar/schedule/appointment/meeting attribute is selected from at least one of the following (from the group of) currently scheduled meeting, free time, start time, end time or break time (Column 3, Lines 11-26; Column 4, Lines 58-68; Column 5, Lines 1-15; Figures 2-5).

Regarding Claims 8 and 27 Henneuse et al. teach a system and method for scheduling one or more appointments/meetings with one or more invitees further comprising the presenting (providing, displaying, etc.) to the user a menu entry and associated pop-up window (window, web page, form, browser window, dialog box, screen, "event definition page", etc.) for creating the appointment template (meeting, calendar, event, etc.; Column 3, Lines 10-27; Column 4, Lines 58-68; Column 1, Lines 1-15; Figures 3-5).

Regarding Claims 9 and 28 Henneuse et al. teach a system and method for scheduling one or more appointments/meetings with one or more invitees further comprising distributing the appointment template (calendar) as a graphic object including time slots (time blocks, appointments, etc.) available for selection by prospective meeting attendees (Column 3, Lines 25-68; Column 5, Lines 17-60; Figures 3-5).

Regarding Claims 10 and 29 Henneuse et al. teach a system and method for scheduling one or more appointments/meetings with one or more invitees further comprising:

- an invitee receiving a note (message) with a meeting request from the user (Figures 2, Step 24; Column 3, Lines 45-55); and
 - the invitee opening the note and displaying the appointment/meeting template in a graphical format (Column 3, Lines 59-68; Column 4, Lines 1-30; Figures 2-5);
- wherein the appointment template (user calendar) is retrieved from a server/system when the note/message is opened (Column 3, Lines 30-68; Figures 1-5).

Regarding Claims 11 and 30 Henneuse et al. teach a system and method for scheduling one or more appointments/meetings with one or more invitees further comprising (Figures 2, Step 24; Column 3, Lines 45-55) the invitee selecting an available meeting time (Column 3, Lines 45-68; Column 4, Lines 1-30; Figures 2-5).

Henneuse et al. does not expressly teach updating the users calendar (appointment template) to block further invitees (users) from schedule a conflicting meeting as claimed.

Official notice is taken that updating (adding, creating, inserting, etc.) a user's calendar/schedule based on an scheduled meeting in order to block other users from scheduling a conflicting meeting is old and well known in the art as discussed above.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling meetings amongst a plurality of users as taught by Henneuse et al. would have benefited from updating the users calendar (appointment template) to block further invitees (users) from schedule a conflicting meeting in view of the teachings of official notice; the resultant system ensuring user's calendars provide information on previously schedule events/meetings/appointments (e.g. by marking the scheduled appointment time slots/blocks as unavailable/busy) thereby ensuring users to not double-book attendees (i.e. schedule meetings for times when the user is available).

Regarding Claims 12 and 31 Henneuse et al. teach a system and method for scheduling one or more appointments/meetings with one or more invitees further comprising:

- an invitee opening a note containing the meeting request (appointment template; Figures 2, Step 24; Column 3, Lines 45-55); and
- the invitee selects an available meeting time from a merged appointment template object which is created by merging the user's calendar (appointment template) and a calendar object (Column 3, Lines 10-68; Column 5, Lines 17-60; Figures 2-5).

Further regarding Claims 12 and 31, the method for scheduling meetings as claimed merely recites that an invitee may select an available meeting time, however the method/invitee does not actually select an available meeting time. For the purpose of examination examiner assumes the applicant will amend the claim to recite that invitee actually selects an available meeting time.

Regarding Claims 13 and 32 Henneuse et al. teach a system and method for scheduling one or more appointments/meetings with one or more invitees further comprising representing (configuring, displaying, etc.) the available meeting times in the user's calendar (appointment template object) buttons (check boxes) wherein upon the selection of a button (timeslot) a meeting/appointment accepted message is sent (Column 5, Lines 17-60; Figures 3-5).

Regarding Claims 14 and 33 Henneuse et al. teach a system and method for scheduling meetings/appointments further comprising:

- representing each time block (time slot, available appointment/meeting time, etc.) as a web page hyperlink to invitees wherein invitees select an appointment/meeting time (appointment templates/object; Column 2, Lines 48-68; Column 3, Lines 8-45 and 58-68; Column 4, Lines 1-50; Figures 1, 3-5); and

- scheduling the appointment/meeting (Column 2, Lines 48-68; Column 3, Lines 8-45 and 58-68; Column 4, Lines 1-50; Figures 3-5).

Henneuse et al. does not expressly teach blocking/disabling the selected time block or updating the users calendar (appointment template) to block further invitees (users) from schedule a conflicting meeting as claimed.

Official notice is taken that updating (adding, creating, inserting, etc.) a user's calendar/schedule based on an scheduled meeting in order to block other users from scheduling a conflicting meeting is old and well known in the art as discussed above.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for scheduling meetings amongst a plurality of users as taught by Henneuse et al. would have benefited from updating the users calendar (appointment template) to block further invitees (users) from schedule a conflicting meeting in view of the teachings of official notice; the resultant system ensuring user's calendars provide information on previously schedule events/meetings/appointments (e.g. by marking the scheduled appointment time slots/blocks as unavailable/busy)

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thereby ensuring users to not double-book attendees (i.e. schedule meetings for times when the user is available).

Regarding Claims 15-16 and 34-35 Henneuse et al. teach a system and method for scheduling meetings/appointments further comprising distributing an updated user calendar (appointment template, object, reply/confirmation pages, etc.) to the plurality of the invitees after one or more (first, second, etc.) invitee schedules his/her appointment (Column 3, Lines 59-68; Column 4, Lines 1-40; Column 5, Lines 45-60; Figures 3-5).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Vincent, James, U.S. Patent No. 5,050,077, teaches a system and method for scheduling a plurality of meetings amongst a plurality of users wherein users identify/define their availability/schedules and generate/create meetings/appointments based on the user's calendars/schedules including the selection of an appointment/meeting date/time from a list of potential/alternative meeting/appointment times/dates.

- Hotaling et al., U.S. Patent No. 5, 124,912, teach a system and method for scheduling meetings amongst a plurality of users defined/identified user schedules/availability and electronic mail wherein the system preserves the privacy of the user's previously scheduled meetings/appointments. Hotaling et al. further teach that the electronic calendaring system and method provides a list of candidate/potential meeting times/dates from which the user may select the desired meeting time/date.

- Levine, Alfred, U.S. Patent No. 5,289,531, teaches a system and method for managing meetings/appointments wherein the system enables users to define/schedule a meeting based on the free/available time of the participants/invitees as well as re-schedule and/or cancel one or more appointments/meetings wherein the users are provided a list/series of appointment/time slots alternatives/options.

- Griffin et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,303,145, teach a system and method for scheduling meetings/appointments wherein the invitee/attendee/participant(s) of the meeting define/specify the conditions under which they will attend the meeting.

- Baber et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,323,314, teach a meeting planning/scheduling system and method wherein the user is prompted to select from a list of potential/candidate meeting/appointment options based on the availability/unavailability of the invitees via a graphical user interface.

- Freund, William, U.S. Patent No. 5,387,011, teaches a meeting planning/scheduling system and method wherein attendees define/specify/identify available and/or unavailable time blocks (slots, periods, etc.) and the method merges/overlays the schedules in order to determine one or more meeting/appointment schedules by enabling the user to identify what invitees can attend at what times.

- Fitzpatrick et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,774,867, teach a meeting planning and scheduling system and method wherein users schedule meetings with invitees/participants based on their distributed availability information (i.e. schedule, calendar) and in cases when there is a conflict with a previously schedule appointment the system/method will "camp" (queue, hold) on the candidate meeting time until such time as the currently scheduled event is scheduled at which point the "camped" meeting will be added/scheduled.

- Detjen et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,970,466, teach a system and method for managing appointments for professionals and/or resources wherein a plurality of appointments/time slots (i.e. the professionals/resources calendar/schedule) are made

available so that meeting seekers may schedule appointments with the professional/resource. Detjen et al. further teach utilizing a pop-up window to add/edit appointments/meetings.

- Zhang et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,016,478, teach a system and method for workgroup scheduling/calendaring wherein users are sent a meeting request/invitation via email in which, using buttons, the user may accept and/or decline.

- Conmy et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,101,480, teach a system and method for group scheduling/calendaring wherein the system can identify/find available time or alternative times for a meeting based on invitee availability wherein the user's availability (e.g. busy time) is stored in a user profile (template, schedule). Conmy et al. further teach that the user calendars identify working and non-working times.

- Cummings et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,345,260, teach a method and system for appointment scheduling for professionals wherein users have access to the professionals schedule/calendar for the purpose of determining a suitable appointment and that users receive notifications of an available appointment that can be scheduled.

- Ralston et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,389,454, teach an appointment/meeting scheduling system and method wherein the system generates/schedules an appointment based on the users selection of an appointment from a list/series of candidate appointments that are generated based on the user's information (e.g. availability) and appointment scheduling limitations such as working/operating hours, availability and the like. Ralston et al. further teach the utilization of a plurality of templates/masks for defining availability, required appointment resources and the like.

- Kogut-O'Connell et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,658,427, teach a system and method for group scheduling/calendaring wherein users can view real-time availability of resources (e.g. training programs/classes) and register/schedule those resources based on the distributed calendar/schedule. Kogut-O'Connell et al. further teaches that the system and method utilizes the well-known Lotus Domino system/application.

- Bates et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,781,920, teach a system and method for managing/scheduling appointments/meetings wherein if all of invitees/attendees are available at any one of the proposed dates/appointments the system offers the invitees one or more meeting/appointment schedule choices.

- Voorhees, Dirk, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0039626, teaches a system and method for managing appointments/meetings between an appointment target (e.g. boss/executive) and an appointment seeker (e.g. employee) wherein the appointment target distributes/publishes their schedule/availability from which the appointment seeker can select/schedule an appointment.

- Calabria et al., Teach Yourself Lotus Notes R5 in 10 Minutes, teach an electronic calendaring system and method that supports group calendaring/scheduling including but not limited to creating and distributing a user's schedule (appointment template) and planning/managing meetings/appointments/events based on those schedules. Calabria et al. further teach that the calendaring system and method enables users to send meeting request wherein upon the acceptance of the meeting request both the sender and invitee's calendars/schedules are updated wherein the update blocks/shows as busy the scheduled meeting/appointment time slot/block.

- Padwick et al., Special Edition Using Microsoft Outlook 2000, teach an electronic calendaring system and method wherein users can manage (create, edit, view, distribute, etc.) their schedules (appointments, meeting, events, etc.) as well as plan/manage meetings by generating meeting requests (calendar/schedule template) based on their review of invitee's availability (schedule, calendar template). Padwick et al. further teaches that the calendaring system and method enables user to utilize custom forms, templates and voting/polling mechanisms.

Padwick et al. further teach that the calendaring system and method enables uses to send meeting request wherein upon the acceptance of the meeting request both the sender and invitee's calendars/schedules are updated wherein the update blocks/shows as busy the scheduled meeting/appointment time slot/block.


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott L. Jarrett whose telephone number is (571) 272-7033. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:00AM - 5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hafiz Tariq can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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